

Our Goal:
A Healthy Deer Herd

The discovery of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in southern Wisconsin represents a significant threat to the state's white-tailed deer population and its culture of deer hunting. Wisconsin has more than 700,000 deer hunters who have harvested an average of 460,000 deer annually during the past decade. Deer hunting contributes more than seven million days of recreation each year. In 2001, deer hunting generated more than \$500 million in retail sales and nearly \$1 billion in total impact to the state's economy.

Wildlife disease experts have concluded that without intervention, CWD will most likely increase in prevalence and distribution. There is no evidence that CWD will "burn itself out" if left alone or of genetic resistance to CWD in white-tailed deer. A simulation model suggests that, if left unmanaged over the next 10-30 years, CWD will spread widely throughout Wisconsin and will substantially increase in prevalence to more than 40 percent of adult deer.

The model simulations are consistent with recent findings from Colorado that have shown increases in prevalence over the past few years in numerous local populations. Prevalence on some local winter ranges there now exceeds 25-30 percent. To put this in perspective, in some sections of Wisconsin's core area, prevalence is as high as 8-12 percent. In addition, the known affected area in Colorado and Wyoming has expanded to the west and northwest more than 100 miles during the past five years.

Successfully eradicating CWD from Wisconsin will require a sustained effort over many years, necessitating cooperation and communication among natural resource and agricultural agencies, hunters, landowners and captive cervid producers. Although this will be a long-term effort, aggressive management early in the program is important to contain the spread of CWD, minimize the size of the affected area and shorten the time required to eradicate the disease.

Our goal, like yours, is a healthy deer herd.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Feel free to contact:

Name _____

Phone _____

You can also call our toll free CWD information line at 1-877-WISC-CWD (1-877-947-2293) or visit us online at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/cwd/>.

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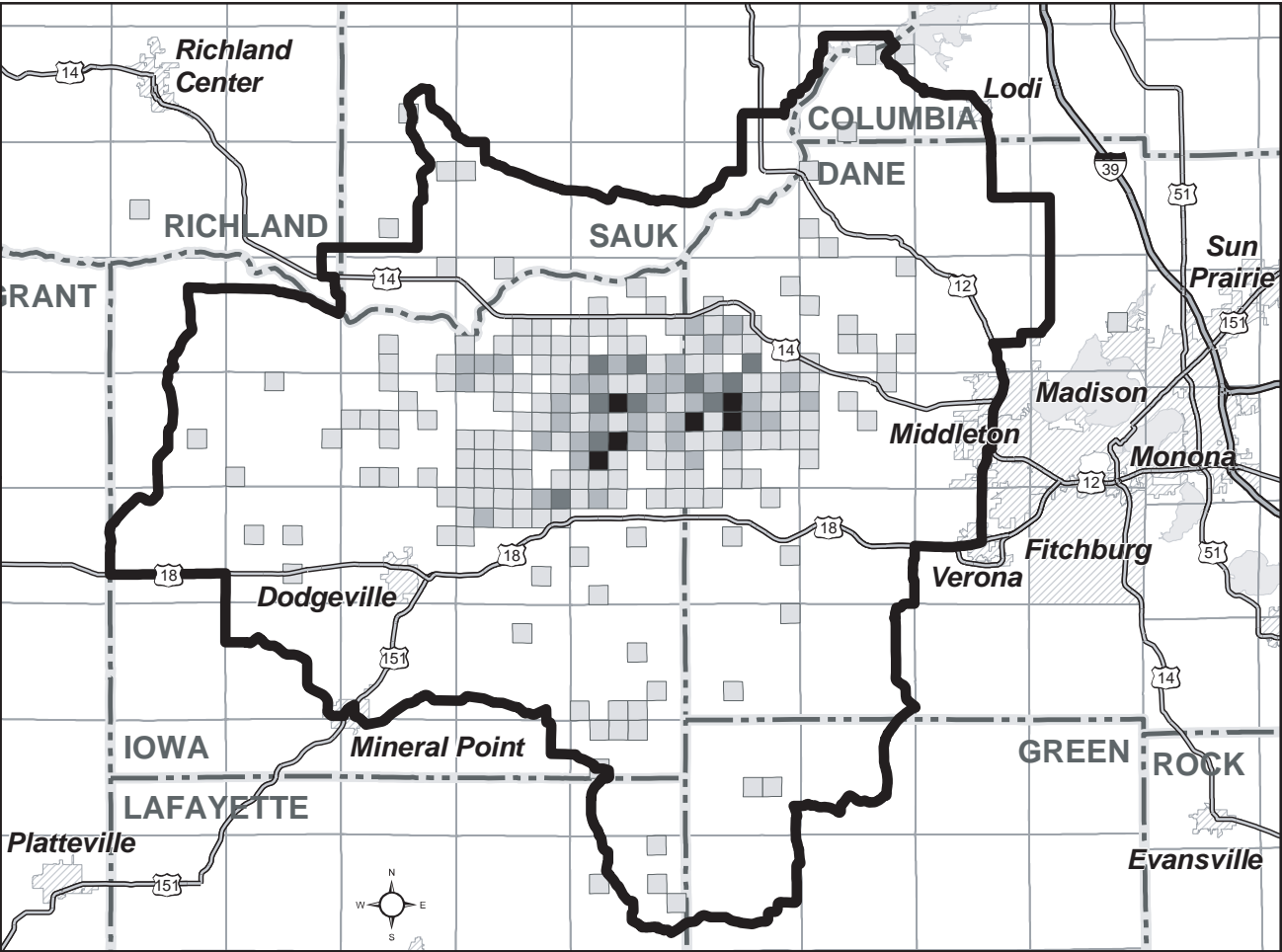
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ELIMINATING
CHRONIC
WASTING
DISEASE FROM
SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN
A COOPERATIVE
EFFORT

The Western Disease Eradication Zone (DEZ)

CWD-Positive Deer Since 2002



- 2005 Eradication Zone
- County Boundary
- PLSS Township Line
- 1 - 3 Positive Deer
- 4 - 6 Positive Deer
- 7 - 9 Positive Deer
- 10+ Positive Deer

In February 2002, the DNR was notified that three deer harvested from Deer Management Unit 70A in western Dane County tested positive for CWD. During March and April 2002, 516 deer were collected from a 12-mile radius surveillance area around the three initial cases. Fifteen of those deer tested positive for CWD.

An extensive CWD surveillance program has been conducted since fall 2002. Through June 2006, more than 100,000 deer have been tested from locations across the state. This sampling effort has been sufficient in the majority of the state to be confident that CWD would have been detected if it exists in as little as one percent of the population. However, it has not been found in wild deer outside of the current CWD zones.

As of June 2006, a total of 652 free-ranging deer have tested positive for CWD, 612 of which have been found in the Western DEZ (see map at left). Analysis of the geographic distribution of the southwest Wisconsin outbreak shows that the pattern of positives is not random, but tightly clustered. The geographic distribution of positives within the southwest cluster has been similar the last four years. And, within the center of the core area, a few sections have prevalence exceeding 10 percent.

Landowners and hunters hold the key to our ability to manage CWD in Wisconsin. For more information, please visit the CWD pages on the DNR Web-site at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/cwd/>.

What’s Happening in Illinois and Minnesota?

Illinois- To date, 147 wild deer have tested positive for CWD since the disease was detected there in 2002. Most of these deer were harvested in the core zone of infection, the border area between Boone and Winnebago counties northeast of the city of Rockford. These two counties account for 123 of the 147 CWD-positive deer.

The Illinois DNR is actively pursuing disease eradication by collecting samples and decreasing deer density in northern counties through extended harvest seasons followed by sharpshooting.

Hunters in many counties are encouraged to donate tissue from their deer for testing. Detailed information can be found on the Illinois DNR Web-site at: <http://www.dnr.state.il.us/cwd/index.htm>

Minnesota - Two and a half years of intensive surveillance, including nearly 28,000 samples, hasn’t revealed any CWD-positive wild deer. However, in March 2006, one farm raised CWD-positive white-tailed deer was detected in the southwestern county of Lac qui Parle. The Minnesota DNR is conducting a local deer survey to determine whether wild deer have come in contact with the farm. Any opportunity to sample a deer in the area, such as road kills, will be used, and they will test hunter-harvested deer in the area during the 2006 firearm deer season.

Since August 2002, two Minnesota elk farms have also been confirmed to have CWD. More information can be found on the Minnesota DNR Web-site at: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mammals/deer/cwd/index.html>.

Disease Surveillance: Bringing Deer in for CWD Testing

Surveillance remains a key component to CWD management. It is the means by which new cases of CWD are detected. Surveillance helps measure prevalence, define the area of infection and monitor the effectiveness of current CWD management strategies.



Hunters statewide are required to register their deer. Hunters in the Western DEZ and surrounding HRZ are also encouraged to submit the head from any adult deer for CWD testing. If you choose to have your deer tested, registration station staff will remove the head for sampling. If the hunter wishes to mount the head from their deer, arrangements can be made for them to do so.

Once collected, the heads are sent to a processing center in Black Earth. Here specific tissues are removed and sent to the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, where they will be tested for presence of the CWD prion protein.

DNR staff will notify hunters by postcard if their deer is CWD-negative. If a deer is CWD-positive, DNR staff will call the hunter and the owner of the land where the deer was shot. Test results are also available online at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/cwd/>.

Landowner Permits

- The DNR will issue permits to landowners with five or more acres of land within a DEZ.
- Permits will be valid beginning September 16, 2006 and expire on March 31, 2007.
- Under the authority of these permits, landowners can hunt without a license provided they meet age and hunter safety requirements.
- Landowners interested in a permit can obtain one at any hunting license sales location for a \$2.00 processing fee by September 1, 2006.
- Landowners can also authorize hunters to hunt on property they own within a DEZ. Authorized hunters can hunt on land covered by a landowner permit without a deer license provided they meet age and hunter safety requirements and apply for a DEZ hunter permit.
- Hunters wishing to hunt under the authority of a landowner permit must first pick up a DEZ hunter permit and landowner permit authorization forms at a hunting license sales location. These permits will also be available by September 1, 2006 for a \$2.00 processing fee.
- Hunters under the authority of a landowner permit are restricted to use of a bow from September 16 through October 13 and from October 23 through November 17, 2006. Guns may be used during the designated gun seasons, and from December 11, 2006 through March 31, 2007.



2006-2007 CWD Zones Season Structure

This year the gun season was shortened from 65 days to 32 days, and hunters may take unlimited deer of either-sex. Although the DNR is concerned about the effectiveness of this approach, hunters have been telling the agency that shorter seasons would concentrate hunter effort and increase the overall deer harvest. The DNR decided to give that a try and hope that hunters step to the plate and kill more deer with half the hunting opportunity of past years.

We continue to try to incorporate the diverse interests of hunters and landowners into our season recommendations for the CWD zones. The two most consistent messages we have heard in the past few years are a desire by hunters and landowners for shorter gun seasons and an end to Earn-a-Buck.

The break between the early October gun season and traditional gun season has been increased. We’re hopeful that the long break between seasons will rekindle the excitement for the Saturday before Thanksgiving traditional opener.

Also this season, Earn-a-Buck, which requires harvesting an antlerless deer to earn a buck tag, will be replaced by unlimited either-sex tagging. Although Earn-a-Buck consistently results in high antlerless deer harvest, which is fundamental to reducing deer populations, it also consistently saves bucks. Since we know that disease prevalence is twice as high in older age bucks as it is in adult does, a season that results in a savings of these bucks may not make sense from a disease perspective. The success of an either-sex season in reducing deer populations depends upon hunters shooting a lot of antlerless deer in addition to bucks. Hunters are encouraged to harvest at least two antlerless deer for every buck.

The 2006-2007 CWD zone season structure is as follows:

Archery Season:
September 16 to January 7

Youth Gun Hunt:
October 7 and 8

Early Gun Season:
October 14-22 (DEZ)
October 19-22 (HRZ)

Late Gun Season:
November 18 to December 10

Tagging:
Unlimited either-sex, same tag for any deer

CWD zone boundaries will remain the same as last year.



Donating Venison

Hunters are encouraged to harvest more deer than they can eat and donate excess venison to the food pantry program. The departments of Natural Resources, Health and Family Services, and Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection are working with meat processors in the DEZs and HRZ to store, test, process and donate unwanted venison.

To donate venison from the DEZ or HRZ, all the hunter needs to do is bring their field dressed deer to one of the DNR operated registration/sampling stations (see article below) or a participating meat processor. A list of cooperating meat processors will be online at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/cwd/> close to the start of the archery season.

DNR Registration/Sampling Station Locations

During the 2006-2007 CWD seasons, the DNR will be operating registration/sampling stations in the western DEZ.

- **Eagle Mart Stop-N-Go in Barneveld**
- **Norslein’s Wood Works in Black Earth**
- **Countryside Lanes in Hollandale**

Additional DNR operated stations may be established prior to the start of the archery season. A list of these stations will be available online at <http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/cwd/> close to the start of the archery season.

Agency staff is also working to contract and train as many private vendors as possible to run cooperative stations. The goal is to have more local stations to better serve the public.

When registering their deer, hunters are encouraged to submit a sample from any adult deer harvested in the western DEZ or the HRZ for CWD testing.